

00296

1955/05/05

SECRET

OFFICE MEMO

5 May 1955

TO: Ambassador Collins, American Embassy, Saigon, Viet Nam

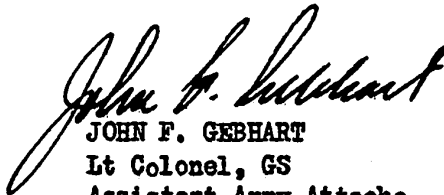
FROM: Office of the Army Attache, American Embassy, Saigon, Viet Nam

SUBJECT: Influence of French in Current Military Situation

In a conversation with General Don at 1130 hours, 4 May, he stated although officers of the French "Services Speciaux" and General Jaquot had since the beginning of the current operation against the Binh Xuyen been advising and trying to persuade him (Don) and Generals Minh and Ty to stop the operation, FAVN and Minh had completely ignored the pressure and that French influence has had nothing whatsoever to do with the current cessation of the attack. He stated that FAVN, and only FAVN, had made the decision to stop; that the stop was only temporary; and that it was for the purposes of giving the troops a rest, of permitting time for "mop up" work in the areas from which the main Binh Xuyen forces have recently been driven; and of regrouping for the third phase of the operation which will be an encircling action deeper into the area south of the canals.

General Don said that from the beginning of the operation none of the French officers, usually working in FAVN headquarters, had been there. He emphasized strongly that the entire operation has been and will continue to be strictly a Vietnamese Army operation, carried out in accordance with Vietnamese Staff planning, and entirely void of French influence or advice conflicting with VNA's own planning.

In connection with the question of ammunition, General Don said there was 6,000 tons of ammunition available to them at Phu To, but that it included no ammunition for 75mm assault guns. He said the French had 75mm ammunition at Go Vap but that they considered it as strictly part of their own supply system and would issue none of it to VNA; hence, the supply of 2,000 rounds coming from Ban Me Thuot.


JOHN F. GEBHART
Lt Colonel, GS
Assistant Army Attache



EXEMPT from Declass.
Per E.O. 12065, Sec. 3-4
Re-review - 1990

DECLASSIFIED

SECRET

EXEMPT from Declass.

Per E.O. 12065 Authority NND 809053

Re-review

By HP MLE Date 7-23-87